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SMU Celebrates Fifth Batch of 1,167 graduates

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PRESS RELEASE

SMU celebrates fifth batch of 1,167 graduates

Among the University's largest ever pool of graduates are 63 who form the pioneer batch of social science graduates and 23 who are the first to obtain the Master of Professional Accounting.

Singapore, 12 July 2008 (Saturday) – The Singapore Management University celebrates the graduation of 1,167 graduands at the University's fifth Commencement ceremony held this afternoon at Suntec City. This is SMU's fifth and largest batch of graduates – 36% more than the 860 graduands in 2007 – to complete their university education and embark on a new journey into working life. Commencement 2008 is graced by Guest-of-Honour Dr Ng Eng Hen, Minister for Education and Second Minister for Defence.

Admitted mostly in 2004, 544 graduate with Bachelor of Business Management, 176 with Bachelor of Accountancy, 133 with Bachelor of Science (Information Systems Management) and 116 with Bachelor of Science (Economics). SMU also celebrates the graduation of 63 students who form the University's pioneer batch of Bachelor of Social Science graduates. A total of 143 graduands are awarded double degrees in various combinations of business management, accountancy, economics, information systems management, economics and social science.

In addition to the 1,032 bachelor degree graduates, SMU also confers postgraduate degrees on its largest group of 135 master's students ever. There are 52 who graduate with Master of Science in Wealth Management, 50 with Master of Science in Applied Finance and 23 from the pioneer cohort of the Master of Professional Accounting. The remaining 10 graduate with Master of Science in Finance, Master of Science in Economics and Master of Science in Applied Economics.

SMU graduates are consistently in high demand in the job market, as shown by the findings of a recent Graduate Employment Survey released in May 2008. For four straight years, 100% found jobs either before graduation or within six months after graduation. Two-thirds received multiple job offers and one in eight land jobs with high starting salaries of between S\$4,000 to

S\$10,000 a month. Monthly salaries for the top 20% wage earners who achieved *Cum Laude* or better in their degrees average at about S\$5,600.

Valedictorian Yeo Zhong Yi

Awarded annually to the highest ranking student of each graduating cohort, this year's SPH Valedictorian Award goes to Mr Yeo Zhong Yi (杨忠义) who graduates *Summa Cum Laude* with double degrees in business management and accountancy. A natural-born student leader, Zhong Yi demonstrates his passion and flair in leadership within the student community when serving the pivotal position as Honorary General Secretary of the SMU Students' Association. Zhong Yi is very active in advocating and looking after the interests of SMU students. He was also Founding President of the SMU Special Interest & Community Service Sodality where he provided a stronger voice and unity to a coalition of student clubs championing eclectic interests ranging from entrepreneurship, social enterprise, investment, women's rights, humanitarian concerns to environmental awareness.

Zhong Yi's all rounded achievements is evident from his impeccable academic track record where his perfect 4.0 Grade Point Average (GPA) score placed him on the Dean's List for 2004, 2005 and 2007. He is also a recipient of the SMU Scholarship and the Goh Foundation Scholarship as well as a string of four achievement awards. While in SMU, Zhong Yi completed an overseas exchange at the University College Dublin in Ireland; visited Russia as part of a Business Study Mission; represented Singapore on a student delegation to South Korea; and travelled to Shanghai, China for community service with YMCA Singapore.

Come July 2008, Zhong Yi will be pursuing his Master in Public Policy at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy on a Public Service Commission Masters Scholarship.

Salutatorian Ngiang Boon Loong

This year's recipient of the SPH Magazines Salutatorian Award – given annually to the second highest ranking student from the graduating cohort – is Mr Ngiang Boon Loong (严文隆) who graduates *Summa Cum Laude* with double degrees in information systems management and business management. Child of a single parent family, Boon Loong is exemplary of the rare young individual who possesses the conviction of succeeding against all odds. After finishing his studies at the Singapore Polytechnic, Boon Loong chose to join SMU because it impresses upon him as a kinder university who is more interested in him as an individual than assessing him just on his grades. He rose to the position of President of the School of Information Systems Society where he led a 12-man management team to manage the welfare and interests of 535 student members and four clubs.

Boon Loong is very actively plugged into outdoor adventure, pursuing a wide range of extreme sports from skydiving, trekking, kayaking to long-distance running. Most memorable would be his *Dare to Dream* expedition in 2005 where he was part of a team of ex-offenders and SMU undergraduates going on a challenging kayaking voyage along the coastline of Johor under the Yellow Ribbons project. Boon Loong also found time to immerse himself in a variety of global exposure. He spent two semesters at the University of Bath in UK and the University of Pennsylvania in USA for overseas exchange, in addition to representing SMU in the Philippines as a student delegate. Urged by his entrepreneurial instincts, he led a team of six and travelled to the Yangtze River Delta region in China to conduct market research and conceptualise a business plan for a start-up.

Boon Loong was recipient of the SMU Scholarship, Community Service Scholarship, five other achievement awards and was also placed on the Dean's List for 2004 and 2005. His consistently impressive academic results and vibrant student life bear testimony to a well-adjusted young man with excellent time management skills.

Senior Class Gift 2008

The graduating class of 2008 has come together to make a collective Senior Class Gift to SMU to celebrate their transition from students to alumni. This is a tradition started in 2004 by the pioneer batch of SMU graduates to encourage each graduating cohort to give back to their alma mater to help future generations of needy SMU students. This year, contributions from the Senior Class Gift will be channeled towards a new "Graduating Class of 2008 Scholarship". The new scholarship will sponsor the tuition fees of a deserving, needy undergraduate for one year of education at SMU. Almost half (48%) of the graduating class of 2008 has pledged or contributed to the Senior Class Gift, achieving about \$13,000 in donations over two days and exceeding previous years' participation rate of 30%.

Said Professor Howard Hunter, President of SMU: "The annual Commencement ceremony marks the completion of a comprehensive education at SMU and the beginning of new lives in the world of business, the professional and public service for our 1,167 undergraduates. I am confident that each of them will become a leader in his or her chosen occupation and in the community. In particular, I congratulate the first group of students – some 63 of them – who have completed their studies in the School of Social Sciences, thereby bringing the number of our Schools with alumni to five. Their education has opened doors for all of them throughout the public and private sectors. We also have a number of graduates from our various Master's programme who will increase substantially the number of our postgraduate alumni."

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About the Singapore Management University

Incorporated on 12 January 2000, Singapore Management University (SMU) aims to groom outstanding business leaders and creative entrepreneurs capable of excelling in a rapidly changing and dynamic world. Today, SMU is home to more than 6,000 students and comprises six schools: Lee Kong Chian School of Business, School of Accountancy, School of Economics, School of Social Sciences, School of Information Systems and School of Law. SMU offers bachelor's, master's and Ph.D. degree programmes in business and management-related areas, ranging from Accountancy, Economics, Finance, Wealth Management, Law, Information Systems and Social Science. It also has a dedicated Office of Research, a number of centres of excellence, and provides public and customized programmes through Executive Education. Collaborations with leading institutions, including The Wharton School, Carnegie Mellon, the University of Pennsylvania and the University of Chicago, allow SMU to draw on academic and research strengths across all major disciplines. The SMU campus is a state-of-the art facility located right in the heart of Singapore's civic and business district. www.smu.edu.sg